

Comment on the “Restoring Internet Freedom”.

I have taught computer science at the university level since 1981, serving as department chair at both SUNY Potsdam and Slippery Rock University (PA). As such I have been especially close to the explosion of services now available to Americans through their Internet connection.

I emphatically support the concept of “Net Neutrality”.

In my area there are only two real choices for Internet Access: DSL from Verizon or a cable connection from Armstrong Cable. These two companies use public land (granted through the placement of their “telephone poles” on my property). They have a near monopoly on my geographic region. That gives them an immense business advantage: there are no real market forces at work to control pricing for the consumer.

The current plan to give them the ability to create “fast lanes” is utterly bogus. Bits travel at the speed of electricity down the wire. The **only** way to make a “fast lane” is to slow all the other traffic. So it is logical to assume that companies seeking this ability are in fact asking to slow down “regular” traffic so they can sell “fast lanes”.

I should be able to contract with my Internet Service Provider for such-and-such a bandwidth at a given price. Once that contract is in place, the ISP has no business deciding which content I select and the speed at which I can receive it. It is like the gas or water or electrical connection I have (also monopolies): I agree to pay so much per cubic meter or gallon or kilowatt. If I purchase a 1MB connection, then I can receive 1MB of data per second, and it is none of the ISP’s business what content I select: their video service or Netflix; their chat service or Skype.

Please stop this ISP-driven push to shatter Internet access.

~David Valentine